

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheet of drawings includes amendments to Figure 1. This sheet, which includes Figure 1, replaces the original sheet including Figure 1. In Figure 1, the detent 34 is illustrated with dashed lines.

Attachment: Replacement sheet

REMARKS

Upon entry of this response, claims 2-10 are pending in the instant application, of which claim 2 is independent. Claims 1 and 11-16 have been previously canceled. Claim 2 has been amended. Support for the amendment can be found throughout the Specification and at least at paragraphs [0011], [0024] and [0025] and Figure 1. Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims define over prior art.

I. Interview with the Examiner

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the courtesy of conducting a telephone interview on December 17, 2009. During the interview, Applicant's representative proposed amending the claims to recite that *the gripping means protrude from the fixing means*. Applicant's representative noted that the Examiner cites bearing cap support (16) of the Hahnel reference as being equivalent to the fixing means recited in the pending claims. Applicant's representative argued that the workpiece counter mounts (14) of the Hahnel reference cited as being equivalent to the gripping means of the claimed invention do not protrude from the bearing cap support (16).

The Examiner asserted that the top plate of the clamping fixture (8) of the Hahnel reference may be interpreted as being equivalent to the claimed fixing means. The Examiner then argued that the workpiece counter mounts (14) of the Hahnel reference protrude from the top plate. In response, Applicant's representative indicated that pending claim 2 further provides that *the at least one bearing cap is clampable between the corresponding half-mandrel and the fixing means*. In the Hahnel reference, the bearing cap (4) is provided below the top plate and the mandrel. As such, it is not possible for the half mandrel and the top plate to clamp the bearing cap (4). The Examiner acknowledged this argument and indicated that he could not come up with an alternative interpretation of the Hahnel reference that would read on the proposed claim amendments.

Applicants further thank the Examiner for subsequently reviewing the proposed amendments and confirming that they cover all the elements discussed during the interview. Accordingly, the Applicant amends claim 2 as discussed during the interview. Applicant

respectfully submits that pending claims define over the cited references and hence, are in condition for allowance.

II. Amendments to Drawings

During the interview, the Examiner noted that the detent 34 is not properly illustrated in the Figures. The Examiner indicated that Figure 1 should be amended to illustrate the detent 34 with dashed lines.

Applicants amend Figure 1 as suggested by the Examiner. Applicant believes that the amendments to Figure 1 address the Examiner's concerns.

III. Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 2-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

Regarding the indefiniteness of claim 2, the Examiner indicated that the figures only illustrate one of the protruding engagement members, *i.e.*, the top engagement member (30) of the fixed jaw (28), gripping at a recess of the half-mandrel. The Examiner argued that the figures do not illustrate that the bottom engagement member of the fixed jaw also grips at a recess provided on the bottom surface of the mandrel.

Applicant amends claim 2 to clarify that *at least one of the one or more protruding engagement members being configured to grip at a recess of one half-mandrel*. During the interview, the Examiner indicated that the amendments address his concerns regarding the definiteness of this claim. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 2-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

IV. Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 2-8 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0011842 by Hahnel et al. (hereinafter "Hahnel"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Applicant respectfully submits that Hahnel does not disclose *at least two gripping means, each gripping means including one or more protruding engagement members, at least one of the one or more protruding engagement members being configured to grip at a recess of one half-mandrel corresponding to said at least one bearing cap, while the other half-mandrel is movable with respect to the gripping means, and a fixing means connected to said at least two gripping means, wherein the at least two gripping means protrude from the fixing means*, as recited in Applicant's amended claim 2.

Hahnel discusses a clamping and supporting fixture 8 having a stationary lower workpiece mount 10 as well as a workpiece countermount 14 for advancing via a slide 12 at right angles to the mounting axis A, and having a bearing cap support 16. *See* [0031]. However, the workpiece countermounts 14 of the Hahnel reference cited as being equivalent to the gripping means of the claimed invention do not protrude from the bearing cap support 16.

Even if it is assumed, for the sake of argument, that the top plate of the clamping fixture (8) of the Hahnel reference may be interpreted as being equivalent to the claimed fixing means, the Hahnel reference still fails to teach that the half mandrel and the top plate to clamp the bearing cap (4). Specifically, Applicant's claim 2 further provides that *the at least one bearing cap is clampable between the corresponding half-mandrel and the fixing means*. In the Hahnel reference, the bearing cap (4) is provided below the top plate and the mandrel. As such, it is not possible for the half mandrel and the top plate to clamp the bearing cap (4).

Claims 3-8 and 10 depend from claim 2 and, as such, incorporate all of the features of claim 2. Therefore, claims 3-8 and 10 are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 2. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 2-8 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e).

V. Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hahnel in view of any of U.S. Patent No. 6,457,621 by Hahnel et al. (hereinafter Hahnel II"), U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0023939 by Hase (hereinafter "Hase") or U.S. Patent

Application Publication No. 2002/0104864 by Knoll et al. (hereinafter “Knoll”). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Claim 9 depends from claim 2 and, as such, incorporates all of the features of claim 2. Applicant respectfully submits that any combination of Hahnel, Hahnel II, Hase and Knoll fails to teach or suggest all of the features of claim 9. For example, the combination of Hahnel, Hahnel II, Hase and Knoll does not teach or suggest *at least two gripping means, each gripping means including one or more protruding engagement members, at least one of the one or more protruding engagement members being configured to grip at a recess of one half-mandrel corresponding to said at least one bearing cap, while the other half-mandrel is movable with respect to the gripping means, and a fixing means connected to said at least two gripping means, wherein the at least two gripping means protrude from the fixing means*, as recited in Applicant’s amended claim 2.

In light of the arguments presented above, Hahnel does not teach or suggest the above features of claim 2. Hahnel II, Hase and Knoll are cited to provide teachings for the feature added in claim 9. However, Hahnel II, Hase and Knoll fail at curing the shortcomings of Hahnel with respect to these features because none of Hahnel II, Hase and Knoll, taken either alone or in any reasonable combination, teach or suggest *at least two gripping means, each gripping means including one or more protruding engagement members, at least one of the one or more protruding engagement members being configured to grip at a recess of one half-mandrel corresponding to said at least one bearing cap, while the other half-mandrel is movable with respect to the gripping means, and a fixing means connected to said at least two gripping means, wherein the at least two gripping means protrude from the fixing means*, as recited in Applicant’s amended claim 2.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

CONCLUSION

In view of the above comments, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance and urges the Examiner to pass the claims to allowance. Should the Examiner feel that a teleconference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is urged to contact Applicant's attorney at (617) 227-7400.

Please charge any shortage or credit any overpayment of fees to our Deposit Account No. 12-0080, under Order No. HEU-003USRCE. In the event that a petition for an extension of time is required to be submitted herewith, and the requisite petition does not accompany this response, the undersigned hereby petitions under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) for an extension of time for as many months as are required to render this submission timely. Any fee due is authorized to be charged to the aforementioned Deposit Account.

Dated: February 25, 2010

Respectfully submitted,

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